During the last three years Oil Companies have allotted 22 retail outlet dealerships in Uttar Pradesh.

(d) and (e) Oil Companies have issued advertisement for 359 retail outlet dealerships and 477 LPG distributorships in Uttar Pradesh which are pending for allotment. The Dealer Selection Boards have recently been dissolved. It generally takes about 6-12 months for commissioning of the dealership/ distributorship from the date of interview.

LPG dealerships in Uttar Pradesh

4971. PROF. M. M. AG ARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of applications received by government for LPG dealership from the State of Uttar Pradesh during the years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 and as well as during the current year;

(b) the necessary action taken thereon; and

(c) the time by which (he above applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) During the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 Oil Companies had issued advertisements for 466 LPG distributorships in Uttar Pradesh.

As the functioning of the Dealer Selection Boards was kept in abeyance since April, 1999, interview for some of the locations could not be held. The Dealer Selection Boards have since been dissolved. Selection for the locations already advertised and pending for selection will commence on reconstitution of the Dealer Selection Boards.

Joint venture of IOC and ELF

4972. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation and French Oil Company ELF propose to carry out joint research and development activities in India;

(b) whether the two oil companies also propose to market fuel and diesel additives;

(c) if so, the details thereof with arrangements to be finalised for such tie-up;

(d) whether the country would be benefitted from this deal in any way; and

(e) if so, the details thereof with amount involved and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (e) The Indian Oil Corporation and French Oil Company M/s ELF have signed an MOU for R&D and market collaboration. Trial marketing of diesel fuel additives has been started. Fuel additives are used world-wide to improve the quality of fuel, reduce smoke etc.

Permission to ONGC to File Writ Petition against Ministry of Labour

4973. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has given permission to ONGC for filing a writ petition no. 490 of 1999 against Union of India, Ministry of Labour & others in respect of Employees Pension Scheme-1995 (Act No. 25 of 1996);

(b) whether functional Board of Directors of ONGC have any personal interest against filing of above writ petition;

(c) whether Ministry has any responsibility and duty for implementation of EPS-1995;

(d) if so, what action will be taken against ONGC;

(e) whether Ministry will direct ONGC for immediate withdrawal of aforesaid writ petition in the interest of dignity of Government; and

(0 if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) No Sir. In terms of Cabinet Secretariat O.M. No. 53/3/10/94-Cab. dated 24.1.1994, no permission is required to be given by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited.

(c) and (d) Para 39 of the Employees Pension Scheme (EPS)-95 provides that exemption may be granted from the operation of this pension scheme and ONGC had sought exemption under this para.